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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: AORC UN  
SUBJECT: UN CAPITAL MASTER PLAN: LETTER TO SECRETARY RICE  
FROM USG BURNHAM

¶1. Mission was requested to forward the following letter to Secretary Rice. The letter was also faxed to IO/S.

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Begin text:

20 June 2006

Dear Secretary Rice,

Last week I met with Senator Coburn about the Capital Master Plan (CMP) of the United Nations, our \$1.6 billion plan to renovate the New York headquarters campus of the UN. At that meeting I assured the Senator that the UN is completely committed to providing full reasonable transparency on this important project.

I am pleased to report that we have developed new language to be included in all future contracts of the CMP and particularly in the massive construction management contract we hope to award in the next six months. We worked directly with Senator Coburn's senior staff on this language.

The next step will be inserting this language into all contracting undertaken by the UN, not just CMP related procurement. In addition, we will begin a process of working to insert this language in existing contracts as well. We will simultaneously put into place the vehicle for swiftly promulgating all non-proprietary and security related contracting information on UN contracting and procurement on either the CMP or procurement service website. Information not publicly available will be available to member states upon request.

It is our intention that the new UN policy on transparency will be the strongest in the world. This includes the creation of a new Freedom of Information (FOI) office within my bureau and a new policy on FOI requests that will be globally recognized as "best practice."

The Secretary General is committed to making sure all aspects of our reform effort are global best practice. UN has already accomplished this with our new whistle-blower protection policy called the "gold standard" for any intergovernmental body. Our new financial disclosure requirements exceed those of the U.S. Government, having worked closely with the U.S. Office of Government Ethics in developing this new policy.

Regarding the CMP, I strongly believe we have a moral responsibility to ensure that our more than 50 years of maintenance neglect ends this year. We must now move swiftly to ensure that the men and women who labor here, the citizens of New York City, and the NYC firefighters and police officers who would come to our aid in an emergency, are not put at irresponsible risk by our negligence.

I will let you know when the measures outlined above have been fully implemented.

With warmest regards,  
/s/  
Christopher B. Burnham

End text.

BOLTON